

presentations to you describing their intentions with respect to developing these so-called saline sections that contain among other things nahcolite and dawsonite minerals.

Point 1 of your five-point program published in January of this year stated, "Pending sodium preference light lease application will be promptly considered on their merits."

I would like to ask what is being done by your Department to reach a decision under present law on these lease applications.

Mr. UDALL. Senator, I can only give you a general answer on this because I have not had a conference on this leasing in weeks. I am aware of these leases. We were serious in what we said earlier, that we were not putting these on the shelf. We did intend to process them and work on them, and perhaps I can give you a more detailed report on it soon.

Senator HANSON. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I would observe that some of these applications, I think, have been filed with your department for more than 15 months, and I share your hope that there can be an early resolution of them. I think that the industry would certainly welcome the clearing up of the problem that is before you.

I would like to ask, Mr. Secretary, does the Anvil Points contract include the right to do research on other minerals such as the sodium minerals and, if so, what information has the government received from the Anvil Points group concerning the sodium deposits and their potential?

Mr. UDALL. Senator, I would like to give you a reply, a quick reply, in writing on this. My impression is, and I was personally involved in the Anvil Points, that the main thrust of the research there is in the direction of perfecting a process for the extraction of shale oil. There may be some of the research in terms of the mineral values, but I think the main thrust is process, improving the process.

Senator HANSON. On the oil shale?

Mr. UDALL. That is right.

(The information requested is as follows.)

Nothing in the Anvil Points lease agreement precludes research on minerals at the Anvil Points facility. However, there is so little dawsonite and nahcolite in the oil shale there that such research probably would not, and to the best of our knowledge, has not been conducted. No data on minerals research at Anvil Points have been made available to us by the Foundation or the six companies.

Senator HANSEN. I note that the thrust of these hearings is to get the reaction from the private sector, and that, of course, tied into the whole thing, I think, is the thought that has already been expressed: businesses and corporations, whether they be oil companies or whatever, are in a competitive situation today. They no longer feel constrained—or at least this is my observation—to stick with one particular activity, and I would just like to observe that whether we do get a viable oil industry going or not, I think, will depend upon the framework of the regulations that are propounded—it resolves itself, in my judgment, down to a simple matter of economics, if a company can invest X millions of dollars in some other ventures, it may very well do that instead of trying to continue with the offering of oil to the consuming public in this country, and in that context I think that all of us ought to keep in mind that the industry, the banks and everyone